(b) if so, whether any policy or action plan has been or is being evolved to reverse this ratio, if so, the broad features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) According to the Agricultural Census, 1990-91, small and marginal farmers accounted for 78% of operational holdings and 32% of operated area. A number of centrally sponsored schemes have been implemented under the Eighth Five Year Plans for development of agriculture which benefit all categories of farmers including small and marginal farmers. Selection of beneficiary farmers is done by the State Governments. They are advised through correspondence/meetings/discussions to give priority to small and marginal farmers while selecting the beneficiaries.

Criteria for giving fertilizer subsidy to farmers

3007. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria, if any, for giving fertilizer subsidy to farmers;

(b) the Agencies operating the subsidy scheme;

(c) whether any land holding owned by a farmer is prescribed as one of the conditions for availing such fertilizer subsidy;

(d) if so, how much;

(e) the total amount of subsidy being given during the current year; and

(f) how much of this subsidy is likely to go to small and marginal farmers?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) With a view to achieve higher productivity levels and ever increasing foodgrain targets, Government of India is giving subsidy on fertilizers under Statutory Price Control as well as Concession on sale of decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilisers to the farmers.

(b) Payment of subsidy on fertilizers under Statutory Price Control is Operated by the Department of Fertilizer. The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is operating the scheme of concession on sale of decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilizers to the farmers.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) An amount of Rs. 6148 crores is available for payment of subsidy on fertilizers under Statutory Price Control. In addition, Rs. 2224 crores is available in the Budget estimates of 1996-97 for payment of concession against decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilizers.

(f) As subsidy/concession is payable to all categories of farmers, no amount is separately allocated for small and marginal farmers.

Conversion of Nuapada-Gunpur Railway Line in BG

3008. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps have been taken by Government for conversion of the Narrow Gauge line from Nuapada to Gunpur in Orissa;

(b) if so, the fund allocated for the purpose during the 1996-97 financial year;

(c) the total estimate cost of that conversion project and the progress as on date; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (d) A survey has recently been completed, and the results are under finalisation in consultation with the Railway. Further consideration of the project would be possible once the results are finalised.